

MANGASARIAN THINKS POPE SHOULD TAKE CARE OF BELGIANS

BY N. D. COCHRAN

I have a letter from R. H. Lanyon asking me to publish and comment on an article by M. M. Mangasarian, lecturer of the Independent Religious Society, on the subject, "What Is the Pope Doing for Belgium?"

I will publish both the letter of Mr. Lanyon and the article by Mr. Mangasarian, and add my personal opinion on the question which is the title of Mr. Mangasarian's article. Following is the letter:

Mr. Cochran: As a regular buyer and reader of The Day Book, I call your attention to the enclosed, "What Is the Pope Doing for Belgium?" and say I believe you ought to print it, and also comment on it if you are so inclined. You claim to be free and independent of all influences (except perhaps REASON). This is a good chance to show what courage and fairness you really possess, as the question is a timely and pertinent one.

R. H. Lanyon.

Following is the Mangasarian article:

WHAT IS THE POPE DOING FOR BELGIUM?

Belgium is one of the most Catholic countries in Europe. For many centuries it has sent to Rome as "Peter's pence," thousands of dollars, which must now amount to a huge sum. To this should be added private donations, endowments, legacies, government appropriations, etc., of which the same Church has been the beneficiary without competition. In short, Belgium has done its duty to the Vatican. But now that poor Belgium has been stripped of everything, and stands shivering, hungry and bleeding in the cold, how much of this "Peter's pence," not to speak of other moneys received from Belgium, is the Holy Father sending back to the afflicted country?

The Catholic Church commands vast wealth. It has many treasures, each worth a fortune; it has saints' tombs that are as rich as banks; it has monasteries with big incomes; it has holy relics that are millionaires; and vessels and vestments that glitter with precious stones of rare beauty and great price. Do we hear that the Church is about to part with some of these treasures for her starving Catholic children in Belgium? She who is so sensitive when a bursting shell injures a cathedral, is she showing the same solicitude for the lives of the people who built these cathedrals?

Chicago, an American and non-Catholic city, is sending to the sufferers barrels of food, trunks full of clothing and a full purse. What is Rome sending to Belgium? How much has the Holy Father and his cardinals subscribed for Belgium?

Should not the Catholics say to the non-Catholics, "Leave the care of Belgium's sufferers to us. We are not only able, but glad to provide for them; for, under the circumstances, it is our duty more than yours to be the first to aid a nation which has been our best patron and customer?"

But is not the pope praying for Belgium? I hope I will not be considered irreverent if I suggest, that it is not the pope who is praying to God, but, I may say, it is God who is praying to the pope. And this, I would love to believe, is His prayer: "Please spend less on praising and worshipping me, and melt enough of your gold and silver saints to buy bread for the little tots whom the cannon has robbed of home and parents." Can the God of the Churches pray like that, and if he did, would the pope hear and answer His prayer?

Belgium, for the time being, at least, is German territory. By sending food, clothes and money into